

October 12, 2011

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senators Joe Lieberman (I-CT) and Scott Brown (R-MA) and Congressmen Charlie Dent (R-PA) and Jason Altmire (D-PA) today introduced bipartisan, bicameral legislation that would update existing federal law to account for U.S. citizens who engage in terrorist activities.

An existing federal statute, 8 U.S.C. § 1481, identifies seven categories of acts for which U.S. citizens lose their citizenship if they perform one of those acts "with the intention of relinquishing United States nationality." Under the proposed Enemy Expatriation Act, an eighth category would be added for a person who engages in hostilities or purposefully and materially supports hostilities against the United States.

"The repeated attempts by the now-deceased al Qaeda leader Anwar al Awlaki to recruit other American citizens to strike our homeland demonstrates the necessity of updating our laws to account for an enemy who would subvert our freedoms to attack us," said Senator **Lieberman**. "This bill would establish in law a fact that all Americans already know – when an American citizen joins wartime hostilities against the United States, he is also renouncing his citizenship and should not be able to use an American passport as a tool of terror or a shield of self-protection."

"Individuals who work with terrorist organizations to attack our country and kill our people should lose the privileges of citizenship," said Senator **Brown**. "The recent arrest of Rezwan Ferdaus, who was stockpiling advanced weaponry and planning a major attack against our nation's Capital, highlights the growing problem of home grown terrorism, even in a peaceful community like Ashland, Massachusetts. In future cases, this bill would take away what terrorists have already renounced through their words and actions—the right to call themselves Americans."

"When American citizens like Anwar al-Awlaki incite the violent overthrow of the United States and work within terrorist networks to coordinate attacks against the American people, it is appropriate that the federal government consider their actions a voluntary relinquishment of citizenship," said Congressman **Dent**. "This bill modernizes the process by which the citizenship status of an individual engaged in hostiles against the American people is examined

by treating terrorists in the same manner as a U.S citizen who marched with the Third Reich, Imperial Japan or the forces of Saddam Hussein."

"Unfortunately, we live in a world where our own citizens may engage in terrorism against our country," Congressman **Altmire** said. "To help meet the challenges we are facing, and to protect our homeland, updates to our current laws are necessary as we continue to fight the global war on terror."

The same due process that applies to the existing statute will apply to those whose citizenship could be revoked under the proposed amendment to the law. The State Department would make an administrative determination that a U.S. Citizen has indicated his intent to renounce his citizenship by engaging in, or purposefully and materially supporting, hostilities against the United States. That individual would then have the right to appeal that determination to the State Department and, then, to a federal district court.

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